

Monday, 4 January 2021

Bible in Time: New Testament Study

Today: Timeline and Canon

Tomorrow: Background on the Acts to the Apostles

Prayer Suggestion:

Book of Common Prayer Morning Prayer -  
[Mission St. Clare](#)

Dear Friends in Christ,

I hope by now you have selected a study Bible that you will use during this New Testament study. I suggested you get one that was copyrighted during the 2000s.

After you have [broken the binding](#) of the Bible, go look for the Table of Contents.

Most modern Bibles will have the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The Old Testament is commonly called now "The Hebrew Bible" or the Scriptures that have been passed to us from the community of believers of Hebrews or Jewish people. The subdivision is usually the Pentateuch, the Historical Books, Wisdom and Poetry literature, and the Prophets. This is the scripture of Jesus and the Disciples and tells the ongoing

relationship that God has sought with us since the dawn of Creation.

The New Testament is generally listed as Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John); a history of the spread of the Way of Love of Jesus called the Acts of the Apostles, and letters to individuals and congregations written to them by leaders of the new faith in Jesus Christ.

Your Bible may have a third section that might be called the Apocryphal and Deuterocanonical books. These books were written during the time between the writings of the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. Some faith communities use them and others do not.

When I talk about "Canon" I refer to the rule or standard of the books and writings that the faith community has selected as a rule and normative to building and deepening faith. This also includes the ordering of the books and writing are printed.

The Bible that you have is a miracle of God and faith communities over the past 6,000 years of prayer, reflection, gathering together, decision making, publishing, and distribution. We as the people of God through its history have come together and said, "These are the writing that tells of

God and deepen the faith that we hold to be true.” Wow!

The Bible was developed as first the witnesses telling the story of God to other believers. These stories were written down and circulated among believers. There were also letters that were written to particular individuals or faith communities that leaders agreed should be shared with a wider audience of the faithful. These were all gathered by individuals, councils, and other church leaders to say these books, stories, and letters deepen the faith and reflect who we are as the people of God. These agreed documents were eventually printed and distributed by the best communication of each era to spread these words of faith.

The Bible went from storytelling to gathering and agreement of what kept the faith and studied, proclaimed, and soul deeping and moved into each of the ways of communication of each time.

So whatever “Canon” your Bible has, it shares the telling the story of faith to generations of individuals, used to worship, and get to know God and the salvation God provides to all who have faith.

In the New Testament, the Gospels are placed first, then the Acts of the Apostles, the letters to churches and individuals, and

the Revelation. **After Acts, most of the letters were arranged by the length of the scroll that it was written on and NOT the order or time it was written.**

Edwards will help us to deconstruct this order.

We will start with the guidance of the book, "Revolutionary Bible Study" by Gene Edwards to look at the New Testament in new ways. We will use Edwards' calendar of writing Acts and the Letters of the Apostles during the first part of the year.

If you want to delve into more about the development of the Canon of the New Testament, search "Canon of the New Testament" for more resources. One source - [Mark Allen Powell](#) - Introducing the New Testament. Here are [some early lists](#) of the books of the New Testament.

In Christ,

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P.S. I will often link sources and additional information via links on the internet.

Sources:

Development of the Canon; Introducing the New Testament by Mark Allen Powell, ISBN 978-0-8010-2868-7. pp. 50 - 53 (New Edition is available.)

Essay - Canons of the Bible; The New  
Oxford Annotated Bible Fifth Edition, pp.  
2235 - 2241. ISBN 978-0-19-027608-9

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